Young Denies Hoover Tie to King's Killing

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WASHINGTON — Andrew Young, U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, today denied any knowledge of evidence linking the late FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover or any FBI agents to the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

"I don't have any evidence or proof of such an involvement," testified Young, in a special appearance before the House Assassinations Committee.

The appearance of Young and two of his aides, Stoney Cooks and Brady Tyson, was the result of a copyrighted story appearing in Saturday's News-Sentinel. The story carried allegations by Mark Lane, attorney for James Earl Ray, confessed killer of King, that Young and his aides had knowledge of FBI involvement in the King assassination.

Lane had charged that committee member Walter Fauntroy had told Young and his two aides, Cooks and Tyson, he had evidence alleging that Hoover had ordered the assassination of King and that an off-duty squad of FBI agents carried out the killing on the evening of April 4, 1968, at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis. The controversial Lane backed up his charges with a 44-page affidavit from Daniel Ellsberg (of Pentagon Papers fame) detailing a conversation between Ellsberg and Tyson.

According to the affidavit, Ellsberg met with Tyson on June 19 of this year at the United Nations Conference on Disarmament in New York. At that time, Ellsberg said Tyson detailed the conversation between Fauntroy, Young, Cooks and himself concerning the so-called committee evidence.

Tyson, who also appeared before the committee today, said he was only telling Ellsberg his own "pet theory" concerning the assassination of King and not revealing any committee evidence.

"We were talking about theories concerning King's death and I told Mr. Ellsberg that my own pet theory was that a squad of off-duty FBI agents, be-

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cause of a bond of racism or some other unknown reason, had killed King," Tyson told the committee.

"I was not speaking to Mr. Ellsberg in my capicity as a Government official," a defensive Tyson stated. "Just because I am a Government official dosen't mean I have to abandon my personal feelings and beliefs."

Tyson concluded by saying he still believes there was a conspiracy behind the murder of Martin Luther King, but "at this late date, I feel it would impossible to uncover."

Young, who was with King when he was gunned down in Memphis, related his recollections he had with Fauntroy earlier this year.

The ambassador said that they had discussed several theories surrounding King's death but "at no time during that discussion did Mr. Fauntroy indicate he had any evidence linking Mr. Hoover or the FBI to the slaying of King."

"It is one of the general conspiracy notions that has flourished for years," Young continued. He said it was based in part on the "harassment" of Civil Rights leaders by Government officials during the 1960s.

"It (fear of being harassed) was a legitimate paranoia," concluded Young.

Cooks, who is Young's executive assistant at the United Nations, based the series of circumstances leading up to Lane's charges on Tyson's "over zealous" in wanting to get to know Ellsberg.

"Grady has always taken an active role in the civil rights movememt and attempts to reform the Government in this and other areas," Cooks said. "When he met Mr. Ellsberg, who he greatly respected for his roll in the Pentagon Papers case, he wanted to make him feel at home in New York."

"I feel he (Tyson) was a bit over zealous in his conversations with Mr. Ellsberg. I think he knows that now," added Cooks.

Following the appearance of Young and his two aides, the committee began probing into the FBI's investigation of Ray following the assassination of King.

As the panel began a four-day public inquiry into allegations against the FBI, chief counsel G. Robert Blakey said "the committee found no evidence of direct FBI involvement" in King's murder.

But Blakey said the hearings will deal with questions of "possible indirect involvement." He said these included questions of whether the FBI's admitted campaign to harass and discredit King as a leader resulted in King's presence in Memphis when he was killed.

In denouncing Lane, Fauntroy, chairman of the subcommittee, said Lane, who is trying to get a new trial for Ray, is a "a man who thrives on publicity, good or bad."

He said Lane's "repeated attempts to spitefully use the death of Dr. King and to spitefully use those of us who were associated with him in life for his own purposes requires that I remain silent no more."

Committee officials refused to comment on a New York Times report today that their staff's investigation has already concluded that Ray killed King for $50,000 from a St. Louis businessman but never got the money.

The panel has been investigating allegations of a former St. Louis automobile parts dealer, Russell G. Byers, that the businessman, now dead, told Byers in late 1967 of the $50,000 offer to slay King.